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ABSTRACT

In Italy, all responsibility for vocational training has been delegated to the regions. At the regional level, three types of training are available: training for work, on-the-job training, and training under special state legislation. No obligation is placed on employers to train the work force. Most worker training is informal and conducted without recourse to any in-company training department. Medium-sized and large companies generally have their own training departments. In-company trainers have many or few functions, depending on the size of the organization. They may be managers, organizers, planners, full-time instructors, or part-time trainers. Channels of access to the training profession include training on the job and institutional training. Within companies, the training section tends to be in the personnel department. No real career process exists for an in-company trainer. The growing tendency is for a streamlined training section that assesses training needs and designs required courses. Training work is provided by outside consultants. At Unilever Italia, training is directed by a training board that consists of a number of managers and the directors of personnel of individual Unilever companies. The board's terms of reference are the analysis of training needs, formulation of annual plans, and supervision. A special feature of the Pirelli Group is that the training process is very extensive, affecting all levels from management to the shop floor. (YLB)

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CEDEFOP Document

Continuing training in firms and trainer development in Italy

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

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Continuing training in firms and trainer development in Italy

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INTRODUCTION

Continuing training today is an instrument which cannot be dissociated from employment and human resource management policies.

The role of the enterprise in the field of continuing training has become a fundamental factor - all available indicators show that companies make considerable investments in this field and that their expenditure in terms of absolute value is increasing much faster than that of the public sector. But continuing training in the enterprise covers diverse activities which range from organized "classical" training to management training measures in which the training component is barely visible. Thus, the term "trainer" becomes a generic term which designates a number of agents who intervene in different ways and at different levels, i.e. identification of needs, conception, execution, evaluation, etc.

The studies conducted by CEDEFOP in the past dealt mainly with the trainers of youth (in the context of public establishments and companies), however, in the meanwhile it has become important to know more about the problems of the trainers of adults, especially in the "company environment".

A number of studies launched in 1990 had the aim of enhancing knowledge of these agents in the light of developments in the training environment and the new strategies in the company. Five countries were covered in this general survey: France, Italy, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany.

These studies enabled a better understanding of the interrelations between these "actors" within the framework of the specific features of national contexts and the development of the continuing training policies of the enterprises. They also made it possible to improve understanding of how the internal and external labour market of trainers functioned. But, above all, they drew attention to the emergence of certain problem areas.

The enterprise is progressively becoming an increasingly important partner of the public authorities in the qualification of human resources as it is steadily developing into a "training site". This trend is manifest not only in terms of "institutionalized" training - more consideration is being given to the role of intermediate-level training and the educational role of work situations in a large number of companies, and this leads one to give some thought to the development of a "pedagogical" dimension in the highly diversified groups of persons entrusted with the task of this training.

On the other hand, the moment training progressively becomes an integral element of company strategy, the role of the training officer is vested with a particular importance because he is the person who is responsible for the compatibility between the global objectives of the company and the implementation of training. While full-time in-company trainers seem to have relatively less importance (the externalization of training services has been found in many companies), the function of training management and the role of the persons involved in it acquire greater weight, irrespective of the size of the enterprise or the sector concerned. The training of this group has become an essential development factor, in all countries.

Finally, it seems that the time has come to ask the question of knowing to what extent it is legitimate to insist on "the occupations" in in-company training today, given the fact that, on the one hand, increasing use is being made of professionals from outside the company - either to give advice on management training or to ensure the training of company staff or to enable workers in the company to adapt to new job requirements when new machinery is introduced - and, on the other hand, the use of occasional in-house trainers seems to be a commonly applied policy. In addition, the potential loss of skills of full-time trainers when they give up their specialized technical tasks to deal exclusively with training, also entails some problems which have not been resolved.

The trainers of trainers are the exception here, irrespective of whether they are in-house or external trainers, because their basic specialized "technical" field is training - they are, in most cases, training professionals.

The purpose of these studies is to make a contribution to the improvement of training provision for trainers in Europe by acquiring more knowledge of the "needs". A synthesis report based on these studies has been prepared and it contains proposals for initiatives which can help decision-making in this field.

We would like to express our thanks to all the authors of the studies who readily responded to CEDEFOP's request and provided relevant information which enabled a deeper insight into these problems.

Fernanda Oliveira Reis

Georges Dupont

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1 Introduction

This report surveys the labour market for in-company trainers, with the emphasis on the problem of their training. The report is in three complementary parts. The first (section 2) is an attempt to describe the basic features of the training system in Italy. The second part (sections 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7) looks at the profession of in-company trainer and discusses the access routes, the existing training system and career paths. The third part (sections 8 and 9) returns to these themes in a discussion of the two company case histories: Unilever Italia and the Pirelli Group.

2 The training system in Italy

2.1 *Basic features*

In Italy the training system is based on a general body of legislation that distinguishes on the one hand between the school system and the vocational training system and, on the other, between responsibilities of the State and responsibilities of the Regional authorities. All activities coming within the sphere of the school are the responsibility of the State, whereas all vocational training is the responsibility of the Regions. The distinction between education and training is made by defining training as that part of the education and training system more closely related to the labour market.

The source of law for delegating responsibility for vocational training to the Regions is to be found in the 1948

Constitution (v. Varesi, 1986, pp. 9-32). In fact, however, this responsibility was not devolved to them until much later, i.e. after the establishment of Regions with ordinary statutes in 1972. From that date on, regional responsibilities for vocational training were gradually broadened until they extended to training in the workplace (cfr. Varesi, 1986).

Very generally, there may be said to have been three phases:

- The first phase ran from the end of the war up to the boom years of the 1960s, when all public-sector measures relating to the labour market were directed towards supporting the level of employment and ensuring that job opportunities were fairly shared out among the unemployed. The results were twofold: the emphasis was placed on the public-service nature of job placement as the main instrument of intervention; and training was neglected.
- In the second phase (from 1972 to the late 1970s) the State's administrative functions were gradually transferred to the Regions with ordinary statutes. As a matter of labour policy, regional responsibilities for vocational training and vocational guidance were consolidated and broadened. The legislative framework was supplemented by the passing of the Outline Law on Vocational Training (Law 845, 1978).
- In the third phase (the 1980s), the training provided by the Regions was consolidated and backed by the passing of numerous legislative measures at regional level; the volume of training was also increased.

Despite the introduction of major changes over the past 15 years, in certain respects Italy's training system lags behind that of other EC countries.

- Italy is still one of the European countries with the lowest school-leaving age, with compulsory schooling ending at 14. This is indicative not just of delays in the reform of secondary education but also of a more general lack of strategy, one result being that shortcomings in the school system are reflected in the vocational training system.

- Italy differs from other countries (such as Great Britain, France and the Federal German Republic) in that it has no centralised system for the certification of training courses. This means that Italy has no experience whatsoever of standing committees with such tasks as updating vocational profiles, defining methodologies for the transmission of training content, arranging for the training of trainers, producing training materials, etc. Another result is that there is absolutely no link whatsoever with universities and institutes of higher learning.

2.2 *Training typologies*

Tables 1, 2 and 3 give basic figures on the provision of training at regional level, with a breakdown by types of training.

(i) "Training for work". Within the field of job training, various types of course have been set up by the Regions:

- first level training, which may be regarded in essence as basic training. This is directed mainly towards young people who have completed their compulsory school education. The aim is to give youngsters with a low level of education the opportunity to achieve the minimal job skills they will need on the labour market.
- second level training is aimed at young people with a higher level of education (diploma-holders and graduates), or people with some working experience. Its aim is to impart vocational abilities that entail theoretical knowledge, experience and job skills with high technological, specialist and managerial content.

(ii) "Training on the job". In the field of workplace training there are various types of schemes, which may be summarised as follows:

- *"contratti di formazione-lavoro"* - CFL, or training/employment contracts. This kind of contract and the apprenticeship contract are two types of employment relationships introduced by legislators to encourage employers to take on and train young people. The law requires the employer to give a general undertaking - which is subject to no checks or constraints - to provide training. As a result, for a long time employers have taken advantage of training/employment contracts without setting up any training programme, on the implicit assumption that training could be imparted informally by attaching a newcomer to experienced workers. Over the past few years, partly due to strong pressure from the unions, a few on-the-job training programmes have been set up for young people entering the working world under training/employment contracts.

- *"qualificazione sul lavoro"*, or "workplace qualification". The scheme is designed to enable people to acquire a qualification in the specific working environment in which they are already employed.

- *"aggiornamento"* (refresher training) and/or *"perfezionamento"* (advanced training). The schemes are directed towards workers (employed and self-employed) wishing to update, add to or upgrade their knowledge within the field of those skills they have already acquired.

- *"riconversione professionale"* (job retraining). This consists of training courses for the unemployed, people employed in companies going through a period of crisis or restructuring (especially those companies having recourse to the *Cassa Integrazione Guadagni*, the fund that makes up the earnings of laid-off workers), and employees wishing to move to a different job.

(iii) Training under special State legislation. The training measures in question are set up by special State laws, in many cases in connection with the granting of authorisation to engage in certain jobs. Examples are courses for thermal plant operators and courses entitling people to engage in a retail trade.

From the tables set out below, it will be noted that on-the-job training accounts for a growing percentage of all training, although that percentage is still low. In 1988-89, "on-the-job training" accounted for 32% of the total number of courses scheduled (table 1) and 31.9% of the trainees catered for by those scheduled courses (table 2). The figures for Emilia-Romagna show that "training for

work" tends to cater for young people with a low level of basic education (lower secondary certificate of education), while "on-the-job training" tends to be for members of the workforce with a considerably higher level of educational attainment (diploma and degree).

Table 1. Courses scheduled by Regions - breakdown by type (total courses, 1984-89)

	1984-1985		1986-1987		1988-1989	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
1st level	8,482	58.9	7,242	47.5	880,4	44.6
2nd level	671	4.7	1,246	8.2	2,763	14.0
On-the-job training	4,059	28.2	5,953	39.1	6,326	32.0
Special courses	414	2.9	598	3.9	1,775	9.0
Others (or not specified)	782	5.4	202	1.3	0.00	0.4
Total	14,408	100.0	15,241	100.0	19,741	100.0

Source: ISFOL (1990, p. 58)

Table 2 Trainees expected on courses scheduled by Regions - breakdown by types (total courses), 1986-89

	1986-1987		1988-89	
	no.	%	no.	%
1st level	104,525	47.6	170,163	46.1
2nd level	21,334	9.8	49,443	13.4
On-the-job training	84,717	38.6	118,009	31.9
Special training	6,369	2.9	29,802	8.1
Others (or not specified)	2,517	1.1	1,972	0.53
Total	219,462	100.0	369,389	100.0

Source: ISFOL (1990, p. 71)

Table 3 Number of trainees - breakdown by educational qualification and type, in Emilia Romagna, 1987-89

	training for work	on-the-job training	special State legislation	Total
- Elementary education certificate	154	2,075	342	2,571
- Secondary education certificate	10,982	5,171	1,801	17,954
- Diploma	3,381	5,292	1.251	9,924
- Degree	192	1,040	70	1,302
- Total (qualification not identified)	14,709 (1,090)	13,578 (4,577)	3,464 (957)	31,751 (7,062)

Source: Osservatorio del Mercato del Lavoro, Region of Emilia-Romagna (1989, p. 520)

3 In-company training

The difficulties encountered in Italy in surveying in-company training are manifold. There is no official source of statistics at either national or local level. Furthermore, there are virtually no research projects or surveys on the problem in question[1]. The pages that follow set out qualitative and quantitative information taken from a variety of sources (discussions with experts in the sector, trade association figures, ad hoc surveys).

[1] Research is currently being conducted with a view to arriving at an estimate of in-company training (ISFOL, 1990, Vol. I, p. 258).

3.1 *Training and the size of undertakings*

In Italy no obligation is placed on an employer to train the workforce it employs. Most worker training is informal, conducted without recourse to any in-company training department. Vocational training is provided mainly by public bodies (in the case of the regional authorities) in the form of "training for work". Over the past 10-15 years, however, growing attention has also been paid within the workplace to the problem of "on-the-job training". In-company training for executives and managers, on the other hand, is arranged directly through the company's own departments, with substantial support from consultants and outside experts. The result is that when people discuss "in-company training" they normally refer to "management training".

This trend appears to have emerged over the past decade, although there are a few significant differences among employers.

(1) Small and very small firms in Italy, which make up a sizeable percentage of all sectors of the economy, including the manufacturing industry, do not themselves provide any "formal" training. In many cases, the workforce is trained informally at the work station by being attached to experienced workers. In such cases, training could be said to be acquired by an informal, spontaneous process based on the way that the work itself is organised; in practice, the "seasoned" workers act as trainers.

What has been described is important bearing in mind that small and very small undertakings in fact serve as the route through which people gain access to the labour market. In other words, in the great majority of cases young people have their first contact with work through being placed with a small firm without any formal training structure, where all training is on the job, without any certification of job skills as they are acquired.

(ii) There are many medium-sized undertakings (as a rough guide, employers with a workforce of not less than 200 could be said to come in this category) that genuinely engage in training. In most cases the company structure includes a tiny training section, with a staff of no more than one to three people, who go to the outside market for actual training.

Within the group of medium-sized undertakings there are circumstances in which training requirements are more stringent, as in those sectors making a more massive investment in information technology (greater computerisation of production processes, the organisation of labour and services). The training needs of even relatively small-scale firms lead to the setting up of a genuine, fairly structured internal training department, with a staff of 20 to 30.

(iii) Large companies and groups have had their own internal training departments for some time. In many cases they were initially structured as separate departments, but later they took on the status of independent firms operating on the open market, offering training services to other companies as well. In discussing this subject, ISFOL argues that in-company vocational training has "moved into the service sector" (ISFOL, 1990, Vol. I, p. 259) (on this subject, see the Pirelli case history, section 9).

It should be apparent from the above that when we discuss in-company training/employment contracts in the sections that follow we almost invariably refer to medium-sized and large undertakings.

4 In-company trainers

4.1 *The functions of the in-company trainer*

In the language of the practitioners, the term "trainer" refers to a person who identifies training needs and plans and sets up courses. In most cases, in other words, a "trainer" is not an instructor but finds experts who, depending on the type of course planned, are called in from time to time to give courses. This is mainly true of the people concerned with the training of executives and managers. The distinction between "trainers" and "instructors" (or "experts") is less clear-cut when we come to training for manual-type jobs.

More specifically, the duties of an in-company trainer may be defined as follows:

- in the first place, the trainer is the person responsible for defining training needs and designing training courses, and who is therefore required to have a thorough knowledge of the company where he works and the technologies it uses, as well as a good ability to talk to the people who provide plant, equipment and know-how;

- in the second place, the trainer is concerned with the organisation of training; his abilities and knowledge are very rarely technical and specialised, but he is required to display great ability in managing (or organising) specialist knowledge;

- in the third place, as the person responsible for training, his main job includes public relations with the outside world (with consultancy firms, trade associations, the regional authority and the civil service); this is a particularly important job when it comes to locating "experts" on the market, i.e. the human resources needed to organise training efficiently.

4.2 *In-company training practitioners*

The practitioners involved in in-company training are different (see ISFOL, 1989, pp. 255-258). In some cases, in smaller companies and those whose training is organised mainly with external resources, the same person may combine the occupational characteristics and duties of several different practitioners. In large companies, especially those providing a substantial volume of in-company

training, there are many different practitioners involved, each with his own specific characteristics.

Managers. These are the people in overall charge of in-company training. They are graduates, mostly in arts subjects (with a degree in literature, philosophy, sociology or education). According to an ISFOL survey (ISFOL, 1989, p. 255), the number of engineering graduates is steadily increasing. This would suggest a change in the resource management strategy of large companies, with growing attention being paid to effective communication.

The main function of the training manager is his responsibility for relations with the outside world (especially with a view to locating the requisite human resources), but in large groups the importance of relations with operational departments within the company is growing in importance.

Organisers. These serve as the link between the training function and other areas within the workplace. Training organisers must have a good knowledge of both the company and the outside environment. On behalf of the training manager, they are responsible for dealings with outside consultancy firms and are involved in the various phases of organising a training service, although the training itself is provided with the help of other practitioners, both internal and external.

Planners. Training planners have the task of developing the subjects to be included in a course, starting with an evaluation of training needs and taking account of the resources available in the organisation. The training planner's specific job is to design "...training phases and modules with due regard for the possible ways of presenting various subjects in the most suitable forms, using appropriate methodologies and techniques, and ways of constructing modular itineraries" (ISFOL, 1990, p. 256).

Full-time instructors. These practitioners are found mainly in sectors that have undergone radical technological and organisational change, particularly in banks and insurance companies. In this type of company, the volume of training is substantial and continually growing. For information only, table 4 sets out some figures that show trends in training in one large bank.

Table 4: Training in Cariplo Bank, 1979-87

	courses	times run	days	attendees	% employed
1979	3	6	7,605	105	..
1981	4	46	9,980	1,305	13.1
1982	13	33	11,825	808	8.1
1983	21	72	11,889	1,584	15.7
1984	23	64	12,110	1,336	13.2
1985	54	201	19,825	5,009	49.4
1986	61	484	18,176	7,045	67.9
1987	55	246	24,951	6,829	64.5

Source: our own calculations based on statistics reported by Ambrosini, Colasanto and Gasparini (editors), 1989, pp. 45 and 57.

Where there is a substantial volume of training, and where that training is set up on the basis of continuing training strategies and procedures, employers use internal personnel as trainers. This form of training may be the transfer of "routine" skills or more specific skills designed to update employees' knowledge of their jobs. In both cases, the instructor does the job of training for most of the year, although he is not necessarily on the staff of the training section. The more common organisational structure is to rely on a high turnover of executives who are detached from other departments for a certain time to work as full-time instructors.

Part-time trainers. There is a growing demand for part-time trainers among employers. In view of the difficulties encountered by employers in finding good instructors in their own workforce, there is an increasing tendency to look outside for these practitioners as well (consultancy firms, freelances).

According to ISFOL, the lack of financial recognition for training work and the virtually total absence of negotiated rules on the subject are obstacles to this type of job being properly established (ISFOL, 1990, p. 258).

There is no formal recognition in Italy for any of the practitioners described above. In the first place, there is no recognised paper qualification of any type (diploma, specific academic course of study) associated with the job of "trainer". In the second place, collective labour agreements - with the exception of a

few company-specific agreements in the banking sector - do not specifically recognise the person of the trainer, and therefore no special financial status is granted to a person engaged in this new profession.

4.3 A survey on trainers

Table 5 sets out figures taken from a survey by the Associazione Italiana Formatori[2] of its own members. According to an AIF estimate, this trainers' association represents above 50% of in-company trainers, so that the information set out in the table should offer a fairly reliable profile of trainers and the work they do.

Academic qualification. Trainers' academic qualifications are fairly high: over 78% are graduates, the degree is usually in an arts subject.

In-company trainers (in other words, those directly employed by their company) differ from the rest of the sample in two ways. In the first place, it is within this group that the highest percentage of graduates in technical and scientific subjects are to be found (engineering, chemistry, etc.). This seems to confirm the observation made above as to the growing attention being paid by employers to

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2 The Associazione Italiana Formatori (AIF) is the Italian trainers' association, one of the foremost groupings set up by and for training managers. It is a forum where they can compare and coordinate and work for recognition of the specific nature of the trainer's job as well as defending the trainer's independence and role. At present it has 1,100 members.

the effective movement of information and therefore to technical and organisational knowledge of the actual situation in which the trainer operates. In the second place, once again it is within this group that the highest percentage of diploma-holders is to be found. Most members of this group are trainers who are concerned with the training of shopfloor workers (operatives and foremen).

Age. The average age of the sample (of 700 people) is on the low side, at 36.2, with a high concentration in the 29-38 age group. The figures thus confirm the assumption that the training profession is fairly young.

Seniority in the job and career prospects. The highest concentration in terms of number of years worked as a trainer is in the 2-5 year group (34.88%), followed by the 5-10 years group (30.8%). Once again, this confirms that training is still a young and expanding job.

In spite of the relative youth of trainers, only in a few cases does training represent their first experience of work (according to the AIF survey, in only 27.9% of the cases surveyed was training the person's first work experience). In many instances trainers have prior job experience in the workplace. There are many cases of people who have previously worked in personnel and organisation (personnel selection, organisational development, administration). Many people also have job experience in other areas: production, marketing and computer and information technology.

Table 5: Statistics on AIF members, 1989 survey

	company trainers	consul-tant trainers	outside agency trainers	staff experts	staff consul-tants	Total
Educational qualifi-cations (n=700) (%)						
diploma	29.9	18.5	24.4	17.5	10.1	22.3
technical degree	25.2	10.2	9.8	7.5	13.0	11.6
arts degree	35.5	42.7	39.0	40.8	34.8	38.6
economics degree	10.0	12.7	9.8	14.2	21.7	12.4
postgrad. degree	9.5	15.9	17.1	20.3	20.0	15.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Average age	35.8	37.3	35.2	35.7	38.4	36.2
Age groups (%):						
up to 35	39.4	40.1	40.7	47.5	20.3	39.3
36 to 45	32.5	38.9	35.8	30.8	43.5	35.3
46 and over	20.8	17.2	16.3	16.7	27.5	19.1
(info. n.a.)	(7.4)	(3.8)	(7.3)	(5.0)	(8.7)	(6.3)
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
% women	22.1	30.6	44.7	34.2	18.8	29.7
Average % time spent on training (n=633) (excl. those not engaged in training):*	77.7	68.8	65.5	30.8	35.4	61.9
Breakdown of train-ing activity (n=633) (%):						
needs analysis	31.1	29.5	31.8	38.2	33.1	32.1
course organisation	30.3	25.8	30.0	34.8	22.8	29.3
teaching	21.6	42.3	24.1	21.0	38.6	30.7
other activities**	17.0	2.4	14.1	6.0	5.5	7.9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Main subjects taught (n=422) (%):***						
admin./finance	27.3	12.9	30.9	17.6	25.0	22.5
organisation	73.4	58.6	75.0	80.4	70.8	70.1
commercial/sales	62.6	44.0	19.1	68.6	33.3	47.9
info. technology	39.6	17.2	30.9	41.2	12.5	29.1
production/logistics	9.4	9.5	10.3	13.7	12.5	13.7
bus. management	38.1	32.8	36.8	31.4	52.1	37.2
(TOTAL)	(231)	(157)	(123)	(120)	(69)	(700)

Source: Rivista AIF (1990), no. 8 (p. 31)

See notes on following page

Notes:

* The AIF membership includes a small core of people not directly engaged in any training activity. In the sample covered here, 67 out of a total of 700 who replied to the questionnaire said that they did not engage in any form of training.

** Other activities include the organisation and planning of activities, coordination of other trainers' work, etc.

*** The column total is greater than 100, since each trainer was allowed to state two or more types of duties.

It should also be pointed out that work experience in the training department tends to be regarded as a transitional job, one that is necessary if a person is later to move up to a higher level. In other words, training is an important aspect of work experience within a career path, but it is neither the starting point nor the point of arrival in a career. This should be borne in mind when considering the replies to the question "do you think you will continue to be involved in training in the next three years?". No fewer than 54.1% of the interviewees replied that they expected to be engaged in other work as well.

Work performed. The average time spent on training is high both for in-company trainers (77.7%) and for consultant trainers (68.8%) and trainers employed in training agencies (public agencies, trade unions) (65.5%). Nevertheless, this does not mean that a substantial proportion of their time is spent teaching. The figures

tend to show that the main work they do is to analyse needs and plan training measures, as well as organising and scheduling training activities. These jobs take up a major proportion of the overall time spent on training among all the practitioners identified. In short, trainers tend to be "training organisers" rather than "practical instructors".

5 Channels of access to the training profession

There are no preset channels of access to the profession of trainer. but only a few isolated experiments in the public sector:

- there are a few experimental courses for trainers set up by public bodies and sponsored by the regional authorities (FORMEZ, for example, has taken part in one of these schemes);
- there are also a few cases of courses sponsored on the joint initiative of employers associations and trade unions. One example is the "master's degree for trainers" promoted by the Region of Liguria (SOGEA, ENFAPI).

For access to the post of management trainer (a person specialising in the training of executives and managers), there appear to be two access routes: informal training in the workplace, and institutional training along preset training paths.

5.1 *Training on the job*

Companies recruit young recent graduates who have taken an arts type course of studies (political science, literature, philosophy,

sociology, psychology), and then give them the job of staff training (in the personnel department).

In looking for personnel to work in training, employers often seek people who have already acquired some experience either in the specific field of training or in personnel recruitment or needs analysis (evaluation of training requirements and course design), with the support of outside consultants.

This means that consultancy firms perform a twofold function: they provide advice on the organisation of in-house training, and they help with the training of trainers, by supporting in-house staff.

There is a considerable demand for people who are already expert trainers and who have acquired their own training through experience in the field. Employers find it hard to recruit this type of staff: there has been a growing demand for training, but the access routes to this new profession have not developed at the same rate. Furthermore, in the absence of institutionalised training paths for trainers, professional enrichment is mainly through the acquisition of a variety of experience. It is common, then, for a young trainer to move from one company to another after three or four years' work to further his career.

During the course of their careers, "experienced-trained trainers" may aim at professional enrichment by attending training courses for trainers, especially as the number of such schemes has risen over the past decade. They include, for example, the courses promoted by AIF.

5.2 *The institutional training of trainers*

The second main access route to the profession of trainer is formal training. There are two possible paths here: in-company courses and outside courses.

There are few cases in which an employer decides to promote its own internal courses for trainers. This is due to the fact that rarely do companies have the necessary resources to organise such training, and also to the fact that there are no special reasons for organising such training internally. The professional skills the trainer has to acquire are of a general type rather than specific to an individual company. This is the reason why it is far more common for an employer to send its as yet inexpert staff to attend courses organised by outside consultancy firms (on this subject, see the Pirelli case history, paragraph 9).

At the national level there are still only a few such schemes, although the number of firms offering this type of service is increasing sharply. The more significant schemes include the following:

- AIF (Associazione Italiana Formatori) is currently running two courses for management trainers per year. Over the past few years, this Trainers' Association has arranged 14 courses for trainers, each for a small group of no more than 13 people per course.

- FORMEZ (Centro di Formazione e Studi per il Mezzogiorno) promotes training courses for trainers in the field of cooperation and small and medium-sized firms. The focus is on training planners/organisers who can meet the needs of the companies that are members of their own organisations (see ISFOL, 1990, p. 257).

- ANCIFAP (Associazione Nazionale Centri IRI Formazione Addestramento Professionale): this national association of IRI vocational training centres puts on courses for the planners of job skill and management training.

6 The position of the trainer within the company

6.1 *The work of the in-company trainer*

Within companies, the training section tends to be in the personnel department. Usually this section is fairly small, staffed by only a few people who make broad recourse to outside staff selected on an *ad hoc* basis to meet specific needs.

In the past, especially in large companies, there were examples of fairly sizeable training sections with a large staff, who were partly responsible for arranging training and partly engaged in actual instruction. As has already been pointed out, at present the most common model is the in-company training section that consistently calls on outside consultants. One example is Pirelli, one of the company case histories included in this report (see section 8).

According to this model, the in-company trainer does only limited teaching work; his specific duties, which he performs independently, are:
- evaluation of training needs (analysis of demand), and
- evaluation of the results.

The planning of training and the organisation of courses, on the other hand, are the subject of collaboration with outside consultants. Teaching activity (in other words, classroom work) is almost entirely delegated to outsiders.

6.2 *The trainer's career*

There is no real career process for an in-company trainer in practice. There is no preset access path, for one thing. We have already mentioned that in most cases trainers' prior working experience has included fields other than training, usually in other areas within the same company. An additional factor is that once trainers have embarked on training there are no prospects of promotion within the same company. It is almost de rigueur for a person who wants to improve his professional status to move to another job, with either a larger company or a company with a different organisational and training structure. This description also applies to the route taken by people who are engaged on training within consultancy firms.

In banking, this does not apply. Trainers are officials who are moved from their own department for a certain period to

work on training. They may engage in training, including teaching work, only part-time, but even so the work is only for a specific period of their career. The normal itinerary is for them to go back to another area of management. This creates a sort of alternation between training and operational work, and it is through this alternation that people can further their careers within a bank.

7 The development of training and consultancy firms

7.1 *General trends in in-company training*

As has already been pointed out, there are difficulties inherent in quantifying the training conducted within a company. This same lack of statistics and research is also true of training provided by companies with the use of external resources. In this area, we can do no more than describe a few general trends.

In the absence of reliable estimates, there could be said to be a growing tendency on the part of employers to organise their training through a streamlined training section, with a staff of only a few people (at executive and/or managerial level), whose main task is to assess training needs and design the courses required. Training work, in the sense of instruction, is on the whole arranged by recourse to outside consultants. In the case of medium-sized and large companies, the ratio between internal human resources and the outside resources on which they can draw is estimated at 1 to 3. This matches the figures provided by the AIF survey (see table 5): the time devoted to teaching by in-company trainers is on the low side (21.6%

of total training activities). For outside consultants, on the other hand, teaching is the activity that takes up most of their working time (42.3%).

7.2 *Consultancy firms and training*

There has been a sharp increase in business management consultancy firms. According to a survey by ASSCO (Associazione fra Società e Studi di Consulenza di Direzione e Organizzazione Aziendale - the association of management and business organisation consultancy firms and consultants), at present there are over 1,600 such firms. Obviously not all of they offer training, but there is a notable tendency towards an increase in the training services offered. Management consultancy was originally directed almost solely at production and manufacturing problems and at administrative work within companies (see ASSCO, 1988, pp. 32 *et seq.*). Later on, those firms extended their range to include marketing, industrial accounting, strategic planning, financial control and even training. At present, training is one of the main services of the many services offered by consultancy firms, in terms of turnover.

The main reason for the substantial and growing percentage of training has been an increase in the demand for both management and vocational training. A second reason has been the trend for employers to decentralise training to outsiders where possible. Thirdly, there has been a growth in public-sector agency activity in the field of training.

7.3 *A survey of management consultancy firms*

Some information on the provision of training by management consultancy firms can be derived from a survey of 213 firms conducted by ASSCO in 1986.

As pointed out, the types of service offered today extend to all management areas and functions, and they may be classified in various ways. The classification proposed by the ASSCO survey is as follows:

1. Management strategies
2. Administration and control
3. Finance
4. Marketing
5. Production and maintenance
6. Logistics
7. Quality
8. Human resource management
9. Organisation and structure
10. Computerisation
11. Automation and robotics
12. Analysis and planning
13. Taxation
14. Legal/company law
15. Training
16. Personnel search and selection
17. Economic and environmental studies
18. Data base services

From the survey it appears that, of all the many services offered, training comes second in terms of percentage of total turnover (accounting for 10.1%), preceded only by computer system-related services systems (13.1%), and followed by organisation (9.9%) and administration and control (9.3%) (see table 6). In interpreting the figures provided, it should be borne in mind that most of

the firms offer a range of services, and that the services accounting for a higher proportion of turnover are not those directed towards a single management function but rather those entailing complex work, running right across a company's organisation and therefore calling on many resources. Computer systems, business organisation and training are obviously included in these services.

Table 7 sets out figures that give some idea of the frequency of services offered by consultancy firms. Among the most common services are training (15), organisation (9) and strategy (1), being offered respectively by 69%, 68% and 67% of the firms interviewed.

Table 6: Percentage of consultancy firms' total turnover - breakdown by type of service offered, 1986 (sample: n=213 consultancy firms)

Services offered	% of total turnover
1	6.9
2	9.3
3	4.3
4	4.6
5	6.4
6	4.6
7	2.4
8	5.6
9	9.9
10	13.1
11	3.1
12	8.6
13	1.3
14	1.2
15	10.1
16	5.3
17	2.7
18	0.5
Total	100

Source: ASSCO (1988, p. 37)

Table 7: Consultancy firms - breakdown by type of service offered, 1986 (sample: n=213 consultancy firms)

Services offered	No. of firms offering the service	percentage of total number of firms
1	175	67%
2	141	54%
3	99	38%
4	132	50%
5	90	34%
6	75	29%
7	62	24%
8	128	49%
9	179	68%
10	131	50%
11	48	18%
12	100	38%
13	59	23%
14	56	21%
15	182	69%
16	47	56%
17	72	27%
18	31	12%

Source: ASSCO (1988, p. 39)

We have pointed out that companies tend to offer several services; there could be said to be a tendency towards relative specialisation in the sense that only a few firms offer all services (15, i.e. 6%) or specialise in only one service (12, or 5%). Most firms provide a range of services (42% of firms offer 4 to 7 services). One of the services included in the range offered by most firms is training.

Originally the demand for consultancy came almost exclusively from large industrial companies with private capital. Over the past few years, the number of companies systematically resorting to management consultancy services has been broadening. Whereas the large industrial concerns are continuing to create most of the

demand for consultancy, there are now new clients as well, such as banks, insurance and financial institutions, public-sector companies and small and medium-sized companies in the industrial sector.

Further information can be derived from the figures on management consultancy companies that are members of ASSCO; their advisory activities, as pointed out, also include training. In 1989, ASSCO had 47 member companies which in turn controlled 58 companies and were associates of a further 34 companies. The total employment provided (by members, their subsidiaries and associates engaged in consultancy work) was 3,282. Of these, 2,313 were professional staff (permanent and freelance consultants (see table 8).

Table 8: ASSCO member firms, 1989

Total number of member companies	47
Total number of subsidiaries	58
Total number of associate companies	34
Total turnover	L.456,500 mn
- associate companies	L.369,000 mn
- subsidiary and associate companies	L. 87,500 mn
Total number of employees	3,282
of whom:	
- management consultants	2,313
of whom:	
. permanent consultants in member companies	1,855
. permanent consultants in subsid./assoc. co's	346
. freelance consultants	112
- permanent consultants form other sectors	421
- other personnel (secretarial, administrative)	548

Source: ASSCO (1990)

Table 9 sets out a few figures on trends in the professional staff of ASSCO member companies. In the space of only six years, the total number of permanent consultants increased almost fourfold from 535 (in 1983) to 1,855 (in 1989). The number of freelance consultants more than doubled, from 129 to 270.

Table 9: Trends in professional staff in ASSCO member companies, 1983-89

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
permanent consultants	535	577	632	848	1,337	1,781	1,855
average no. per firm	24	22	24	33	42	46	39
freelance consultants	129	115	82	94	137	200	270
no. days worked	4,293	6,160	5,090	6,210	6,379	10,995	16,792
average days per consultant	33	54	62	66	47	55	62

Source: ASSCO (1990)

The growth in management consultancy work occurred in all services, including training. Table 10 gives figures, again in connection with ASSCO member companies, on trends in the training activities. In 1983-89, their training activities increased in terms of both courses, number of days training provided and trainees. In the type of course offered work, there was a growing tendency to opt for the formula of short courses (three or four days per course) for small groups (of 15-20).

Table 10: Trends in training activities in ASSCO member companies, 1983-89

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
no. courses	630	883	482	593	1,607	2,341	2,759
no. of days	3,840	6,002	3,491	3,947	6,549	8,846	12,558
total attendance	15,142	13,301	6,823	8,953	19,952	37,836	..
aver. no. days/course	6.1	6.8	7.2	6.7	4.1	3.8	3.8
aver. course attendance	24.0	15.1	14.2	15.1	12.4	16.2	..
% inter-company courses (out of total no. of days)	34%	31%	18%	18%	32%	25%	21%

Source: ASSCO (1990)

8 The case of Unilever Italia

8.1 *Foreword*

Unilever is one of the largest international industrial and commercial groups. It employs about 300,000 people and produces popular brands of foodstuffs, toiletries and household goods, as well as industrial products; it also operates in agri-business. Detergents account for 22% of its turnover (which amounted to L.36,261,050 million in 1988). Oils and fats represented 19% of its turnover, food products and soft drinks 30%, with other chemicals and agricultural products accounting for the balance. The breakdown of its turnover is 62% in Europe, 19% in North America and 19% in the rest of the world.

The Board consists of twenty members of various nationalities; within the Board there is a Special Committee which has the overall responsibility for business affairs, strategies and long-term objectives. Each of the other Board members has a specific task

(product groups, geographical areas and specific functions). Operating companies at national level (such as Unilever Italia) have the maximum freedom of action and manage their own affairs under a programme agreed with the Group's head office. Unilever Italia is regarded as a leading-edge company in the field of employee training due to the importance it attaches to training and the degree of innovation in its training programmes.

8.2 *The position of training in the company*

In Unilever Italia, the training system is run by a "Training Council" consisting of the heads of personnel of the companies and a group of senior managers(the heads of functional areas). Primary responsibility lies with the Training Department (a small group within the Training Council), with the Council setting the following goals:

- identify the training needs in the various structural bands concerned (junior managers, middle managers, senior managers);
- set standards for the training results;
- evaluate training activities.

The Council, which has been in operation since 1985, launched on a review in 1988 with a view to restructuring the training programmes. A Council meeting in June 1988 formally approved the innovations proposed by the working group. After then, the Council continued to be a permanent body with the tasks of decision-making,

supervision and monitoring of training activity. It meets twice a year to consider annual programmes (forward and past). This creates a close link between training and the personnel department (since the heads of personnel are on the Council), but an even more important is that training and management staff liaise (the area heads are also on the Council), so that training is administered at the highest level.

The practical organisation of training programmes, however, is entrusted to a Training Office, answerable directly to the Council, with five members: two in-company trainers and three secretaries. Apart from the Training Council and the Training Office there are no agencies, either permanent or temporary - such as a task force or others - devoted to management training. More specifically, then, training functions and roles are currently distributed as follows:

- the administration of training, administering course enrolments, preparing documentation, dealing with hotels and the provision of information are the responsibility of the Training Office's secretarial staff.
- the work of guidance and strategic decision-making is done by the Training Council, which gives the Training Office guidelines for training activities and establishes annual programmes, with due allowance for the Training Office's suggestions and proposals. It also performs the task of analysing training needs.

- bringing those training programmes into being is the function of the two officials in the Training Office. They also have the task of contacting course instructors, who are professionals from outside the company. Both training officials, however, also act as instructors themselves on a regular basis on the courses, together with the outside professionals.

There is no actual "tutoring" in the sense of personal teaching. Finally, it should be pointed out that training for clerical and blue-collar workers is separate from the training or managers. It is run directly by the Personnel Departments in individual units, after negotiating with the local union representatives (on the "Delegates Councils"). Training at this level is not highly developed, however, and does not proceed according to a regular schedule. The courses are *ad hoc*, covering specific subjects. In some instances they are run with the help of grants from the European Social Fund, in connection with computerisation, technological and production reorganisation, the broadening of duties (marketing, or example) or courses in English.

8.3 *Developments in the trainer's function*

The changes that occurred in the organisation of training in about 1985 were essentially motivated by a stragegic decision on the part of the holding company to embark on the decentralisation of decisions in individual companies, setting up a system for the evaluation of the work of companies (and their internal divisions) in the light of budget and market goals agreed with the parent company. This made it necessary to train up a highly motivated management staff

with a sense of individual responsibility who could arrive at their own autonomous decisios in their own sphere of activities. The reform and consolidation of training activities, therefore, reflected the aims of optimising the use of internal human resources at all management levels and the greater integration of employees with company objectives. This process of decision-making decentralisation was matched by a change in the intermediate establishment tables of the companies where staff activities were developed and jobs coordinated and integrated according to a matrix-type organisation.

The administration of training remained the responsibility of secretarial staff, as before.

The design and management of training projects underwent a radical review. Starting with a series of courses on specific subjects, depending on the particular demand from groups of managers and individual offices, the next step was to define an integrated management education system. The aim of this system was to monitor each manager's career over a period of twelve years. It breaks down into three levels or three types of course: for junior management, management and middle management. The three types of course, each lasting two weeks, are called Demos, Polis and Kosmos respectively. Each one is subdivided into three identical thematic areas: relations between the company and the individual; professionalism; and understanding and management of organisational complexities. The relative emphasis on those three themes, however, differs depending on the type of course: the individual/company relationship is of greater importance in the Demos course (for new

recruits), but takes up less time in Kosmos. Professionalism is of average importance in Demos, of maximum importance in Polis and of minimum importance in Kosmos. Understanding of organisational complexities is minimal in Demos, average in Polis and maximum in Kosmos.

- the Demos course is set up for newly recruited graduates, its main aim being to stimulate thinking on the subject of personal development and the relationship between the individual and the organisation.
- the Polis course is set up for lower- to middle-management, its priority being to develop professional skills by promoting a common ground of technical and specialist knowledge among homogeneous groups of managers.
- the Kosmos course is aimed at middle management and is designed to enrich the managerial skills that are vital to someone managing human resources, as well a broadening their view of the company environment by proposing inter-functional subjects as the themes of study.

It is obvious, then, that the facilities set up by the company for the evaluation of training needs, in other words the Training Council, is entirely integrated in the structure of the company. More specifically, it is a staff function, and is itself the expression of a matrix-type of organisation.

It is not yet apparent how the training organiser and teacher function has developed. To an extent, this function is

performed by the two officials from the Training Office, but it is also performed by professionals from outside the company. Since the instructors in question have now been associated with the work of Unilever and a few other clients for seven or eight years, they are well aware of the problems faced by the company, its internal organisation and the duties involved in the training process. Whereas the two internal instructors teach on the subjects of relations between the individual and the company, the outside instructors are responsible for classes on the subject of specific professional skills and organisational complexities. For the outside consultants the areas of instruction are: commerce and finance; information technology; logistics; marketing and sales; personnel; organisational development; socio-economic environment; strategic planning; and technology.

The vocational training courses arranged in individual establishments for operatives and office staff are, as we have pointed out, negotiated with the unions. The decision is taken within the company, but full responsibility for running the training is delegated to outside consultancy firms after discussing the content and teaching methods with them. The arrangements are made by the Personnel Department in each establishment.

8.4 *Training jobs*

The importance attached to the integration of the individual in the company and self-promotion is confirmed by the type of skills that the staff of the Training Office possess: one is a sociology graduate who went on to take a postgraduate course in psychology, who

has been concerned with psychoanalysis and is very interested in the subject of group psychology; the other member of the Office is an economics graduate who has also engaged in analysis and is interested in the same subjects as his colleague.

Although they have not taken a specific course for trainers, both of them are interested in training matters and are active members of the Italian trainers' association, Associazione Italiana Formatori (AIF). Both of them, as pointed out, are involved in the training courses with a teaching role, especially on subjects such as: working relationships; relations with authority; how one relates to oneself when going through a period of development; stages of life; crisis periods; and growth potential. In these activities, they look to outside psychoanalysts or psychologists, including university professors, for consultancy and actual teaching. To this end, psychological role-playing and training group techniques are employed.

In the case of vocational training courses organised in companies for shopfloor and clerical workers, use will be made of consultants from outside companies with specific vocational skills, teachers in private vocational schools or experts employed by other companies in the same group for individual classes. The Personnel Departments also take due note of proposals from the unions and retain their responsibility for the analysis of training needs, but the planning and implementation of the course are the responsibility of outside consultancy firms or teachers from the vocational schools who are hired to give the courses. Once the course programmes have been defined, however, they are discussed with the Personnel Department.

The experts, usually middle- or senior-management in the companies in the Unilever group, acting on an occasional basis as teachers of individual subjects in these courses, have the classroom backing of teachers from the advisory firms, discussing in advance the content of classes with them.

As we have seen, the union bodies within each establishment, the "Councils of Delegates", negotiate training programmes each year. In larger establishments, there is a permanent training committee for this purpose, consisting of four or five union representatives.

8.5 *Conclusions*

We have noted the existence of a Training Council and the close integration between managerial functions and training. Training is, moreover, closely linked with managerial career development, since it is one of the prerequisites for promotion from one grade to the next at management level.

We have also seen that the integrated programme of training stops at middle management level. There is, however, some training for senior management as well: encouragement is given for independent training (by giving notice of courses for managers arranged by leading European and US universities or by outside consultancy firms) and the organisation of seminars within the Group. These are always arranged by the Training Office and are on general cultural subjects (such as the function of the company in present-day society, the manager's role and the general economic situation).

As is obvious, the two officials in the Training Office tacle a vital set of tasks: they arrange seminars for senior management, outlining the subjects in liaison with the Training Council; they organise training courses; they also teach; and they furnish information on university courses and outside consultancy firms which may be of interest to personnel. In this framework, however, some of their skills need to be developed. We have seen that the tasks of needs analysis, planning and verification of results are the responsibility of the Training Council, although its members (heads of personnel, managers) have no specific expertise in this field. There is a need, only recently perceived by the company, to develop a training programme along these lines for members of the Training Council. A programme is currently under discussion but has not yet been finalised.

9 The case of the Pirelli Group

9.1 *Foreword*

Pirelli is an international group operating in the rubber industry. Its head office is in Milan and (as of 1989) it has 69,329 employees in 138 establishments and main offices in 17 countries. The group's operations are based on three product types: cables, tyres and diversified products. Its turnover, amounting to US $7,000 million in 1988, breaks down as follows: cables 42.5%, tyres 42.4% and diversified products 15.1%. The breakdown of turnover by geographical area is as follows: Europe 64%, North America 13%, South America 17.5%, and the rest of the world 5.5%.

The choice of Pirelli as a case history for analysis in this report is based on its lengthy tradition of staff training at various levels: management, technician, clerical worker and production workers on the shopfloor. In both these respects, the Group is a leader among large companies in the same and even in other production sectors. Its case is particularly interesting in the extent to which training has been placed on a formal footing, in the extension of training to all personnel in the company and in the intensity of training (it is estimated that each employee spends an average of five days a year training).

It should be pointed out that the training of management and executives is organised in an entirely different manner from the training of production workers and technicians. The two levels of training should therefore be analysed separately.

9.2 *The position of training in the company*

The training of management and executives is arranged by a specific section, the Training Office, which is part of the Personnel Department together with Personnel Recruitment, Industrial Relations and Development and Human Resources Offices. The Personnel Department in turn comes under the Department of General Affairs, which comes directly under the Group's Directorate General. In each establishment, a training official is fairly important: he is answerable to the Personnel Management and assesses the training needs in his company, reporting on those needs to the Group's Training Office.

The central Training Office has a membership of six: three members are each responsible or a specific field of activity: management training; training as an introduction to the workplace; and specific training projects. These officials come directly under the Personnel Department and their grades are at the lowest management level. They also work with a classroom technician who is responsible for setting up all the teaching aids needed in the conduct of courses (overhead projectors, videotapes, etc.), and he is at the highest grade in the grading system, which is the same for shopfloor workers and clerical workers. Finally, there are three secretaries in the Office with administrative duties.

The various training functions are highly concentrated in the persons of the area officials and at the same time there is specialisation among these officials and in the other roles in the Office.

The administration of training, together with all the work of organising courses, enrolling participants, contact with those taking courses, briefing, preparing documentary material, is undertaken by the three secretaries who, for accounting and financial tasks, refer directly to the Group's General Accounts Office. The three training officials have the following tasks, each within his own area:

- defining strategies and guidelines for training, together with the Personnel Manager;
- drawing up the Group's annual training programme;
- contacting and reaching agreements with individual companies in the Group as to the courses to be arranged within each company;

- analysis of training needs, together with the training officers in individual establishments;
- contacting and entering into agreements with the outside consultancy firms appointed to run the courses;
- discussing with the teaching staff (made available by the consultancy firms) the content and teaching methods to be used in the courses;
- at the end of the year, drawing up a report on training in their own area.

On occasions, the three training officials may also lead courses or engage in actual teaching.

Finally, the classroom technician has the duties of organising, maintaining and operating the teaching aids, which means that he attends the courses himself or provides advice to the instructors.

As pointed out, the training of production and ofice workers is organised separately. The central point for this activity is the Piero Pirelli Institute. From the time of its creation in the mid-1950s and up to 1985, it was an actual vocational school with the task of training semi-skilled and skilled workers, at least some of whom were later recruited by companies within the Group. Following the radical restructuring of the Group in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Pirelli School became a consortium company, still owned by the Group, concerned with training and organisational consultancy both for the Group and for other private companies requesting its services. (At present, 70% of is work is for customers other than the Pirelli Group.) As part of this radical change, the facilities have continued to be those

of a training school with a management department, technical and administrative personnel and teaching personnel. There are at present 15 full-time instructors (employees of the school) and 20 part-timers from outside, who are employed by various companies (by the Group, but also by others).

Apart from the Piero Pirelli School and the Training Office (with the training officers in individual establishments) there are no other agencies concerned with employee training. More particularly, there is no expertise in training needs or guidance to individuals in their personal development plans. The central Training Office has only occasional contact with the Office for the Development of Human Resources as regards the formulation of training programmes, and has no contact with Personnel Recruitment.

9.3 *Developments in the trainer's job*

The technological and organisational changes and new management strategies established between the late 1970s and the mid-1980s have had a considerable influence, now as in the past, on the processes of employee training. The organisational changes that have occurred may be summarised as follows: partial decentralisation of production phases to third countries and the introduction of new technology into the production process, with a relative cutback in manpower on the shopfloor, especially the low-skilled; and an accelerating shift to the service sector because of the development of technical, clerical and management jobs, as a result of the development of the Group's international role in an ever more turbulent and competitive

environment. All the functions associated with research and development, marketing, customer relations and organisation have therefore been broadened.

With growing competition at international level, the quality, the product, product diversification and higher innovation content in both product and process are becoming steadily more important. The main effects of these processes on training may be summarised as follows:

- the training of shopfloor workers has been cut back overall and courses for skilled workers have been increased (maintenance, numerically controlled machine operators, electronic technicians). Nevertheless, the company has not closed down the Piero Pirelli training school but, as we have stated, has decided to convert it (although with the same structure) into a training and consultancy firm serving the whole industrial world, teaching not only shopfloor skills but also office and management techniques.
- the training process, which used to be confined to newly recruited graduates and lower-ranking officials, has been extended to the management level.
- training has been diversified and now includes more courses on various problems encountered by the company. Previously there used to be only courses in purchasing/logistics and personnel/organisation.

- finally, the training activity coordinated by the centre is currently being extended to other establishments (in other words, the relationship and coordination with the heads of training in the Group's factories has been strengthened) and to outside companies. (Work is just starting on the coordination of international-level training.)

The changes in the organisation of the Training Office have been just as substantial. Up to five years ago there was a training manager with the task of defining training strategies, reviewing needs and drawing up the training programme, and three trainers engaged on instruction. At present, as we have seen, there are three officials, each responsible for a training area. Previously most courses were run by the company, but today all management training is farmed out to consultancy firms (although the three officials still take part in the courses, sometimes as instructors). More specifically:

- there have been no changes of note in the administration of training. The work is still assigned to the secretarial staff in the Training Office.
- on the subject of the planning and management of training projects, there is growing integration in the training process, with the manager continuing to train throughout his career. In other words there is a programme for all managers, consisting of three stages: the first is a modular course (3 one-week modules) for newly recruited graduates, the purpose being to integrate them in the Pirelli group; the second is a modular course (3 modules of 4, 3 and 3 days respectively) on basic management for level 1 managers, to give them a grounding in

organisational responsibilities, efficiency evaluation, the planning and control system and defining a cost-benefit plan; the third consists of a modular course (three modules of 4, 4 and 3 days) on advanced management for level 2 managers, to acquaint them with managerial roles, goal-setting, management policies and manager development, the management of inter-functional relations, etc.

Apart from the institutional courses for managers there are *ad hoc* courses covering the company's strategic problems in a given phase (purchasing/logistics; commercial/marketing; finance/ administration/control; personnel/organisation; production; research and development; information systems; quality). Depending on needs, the emphasis may shift from one of these main themes to another, with a training "campaign" being launched on a specific subject. A few years ago, for example, courses on "information systems" were more highly developed, whereas today there is a battery of courses on "quality".

The present trend, then, is to implement an integrated training system that is of value in management training and can simultaneously offer a timely response to the Group's strategic needs, which may vary over a given period. The group of three training officials has been set up (as we have described) to define the content of training. They work in close contact with the Personnel Manager and, to a growing extent, with the training officers in the Group's factories and individual companies.

Although the management of courses is delegated to outside consultancy and training firms, there is no doubt that stringent control is exerted over the training process by the Group. With the guidance and decision-making processes, it should be pointed out that there is still a high degree of centralisation (Training Office), but it is combined with a growth in the number of roles (the training officers in factories and companies), which increases the requirement for coordination and control. For the time being, there are no plans to set up specific bodies such as a "Training Council".

In view of the evolution in training needs, the training-related functions which developing fastest are the evaluation of training needs, the course design and the evaluation of the impact of training on the production process. In other words, functions associated with the organisation of training are developing faster than those associated with training content or methods; the three training officials also have basic responsibility for this second type, since they have to discuss the management of courses with the instructors.

9.4 *Training jobs*

Once again, we have to take into account the differences between the Training Office and the Piero Pirelli School. The existing professional responsibilities of the three area officials in the Training Office and the factory training officers may be summarised as follows:

(i) the people are on the average fairly young (about 30), and have a degree, almost all of them in arts subjects (philosophy or

literature, or in social science (political science, sociology); in some cases their degree thesis has been on the subject of training in the workplace;

(ii) once they are recruited (immediately after graduating) they take the training course for new recruits in the organisation of the Pirelli Group, which covers its history, structure, basic technologies, products and markets;

(iii) the three area officials also take a training course for trainers set up by a consultancy firm outside Pirelli. This lasts three weeks and covers the psychology of learning, group psychology, interactive dynamics, group management techniques, classroom management and group leadership methods, strategies and techniques.

The expertise of the three training officials lies in the fields of basic culture, psychopedagogical methods and organisation. The other training officers in individual factories have only basic and organisational skills, but the tendency is for them to attend a training course as well.

The expertise of the three training officials reflects the role they perform, with is to help link the company's administration and training, and liaise on the training plans and the consultancy firms which are to run the courses and supply the teaching. But that expertise also means that the three officials can take part in the courses as replacements for an instructor or in special cases.

The current trend is for all training officers at the various levels to broaden their knowledge of the analysis of training needs and the effects of the training process on the organisation.

In the Piero Pirelli School, the 15 full-time instructors have only specific, job-skill expertise. In other words, they are familiar with the subjects they teach through their own practical experience, having already worked in a company in that particular industry. To help them acquire teaching skills, they work side by side with a more senior instructor in the classroom for a brief period (about a week) when they start their teaching work. The 20 part-time trainers simultaneously work in other companies within the Group, and have only specific vocational skills. They are selected by the School by arrangement with the factory managers, based on their job abilities, experience and availability.

9.5 *Conclusions*

As far as Pirelli is concerned, a labour market in the field of training may well be created in the future, both internal and in dealings with other companies. The trainers tend to be young, as we have found, and at present they are increasing in number and in expertise. This means that a turnover of trainers among the various companies in the Group is likely, both inside and outside Italy and among the Group's and other companies. Personnel Management is aware of this likelihood and for this very reason is trying to create a broader group of personnel capable of setting up training and also of stepping in as instructors in case of need.

The Training of Trainers

The case of Italy

Summary

1. Introduction

The report on the labour market and the training of trainers in Italy is in three parts: basic features of the training system; the profession of the in-company trainer; and an analysis of two case histories, Unilever Italia and Pirelli.

2. The Context

There is no binding legislative framework in Italy for vocational training. No obligation is placed on the employer to provide for the training of employees, although training provision is in fact made on a broad and comprehensive scale, especially in large and medium-sized undertakings. As a result, reasonably reliable statistics are not available on this subject, and there is virtually no social research in the field.

3. The Training System

In Italy, the training system breaks down between the school education system, for which the State is responsible, and the vocational training system, which is the responsibility of the Regions. Vocational training may be classified as follows: training in the workplace for young people not yet recruited; on-the-job training for newly recruited employees; and training for which provision is made by specific Government legislation (in order to obtain particular licences or authorisation to do particular jobs).

4. In-company training

Over the past few years there has been an increase in training schemes within undertakings, especially for executive and managerial staff. Nevertheless, training is mainly concentrated in large and medium-sized undertakings.

In the language used by practitioners, the term "trainer" is used to define a person who identifies training needs and plans and sets up courses. In most cases, then, a trainer is not an instructor but calls on the services of experts and consultants brought in from outside consultancy firms for the work of classroom instruction.

In outline, the practioners involved in training are as follows: managers responsible for in-company training (who tend to be arts graduates and relatively young); organisers, who are responsible for dealings with outside consultancy firms and help to set up courses; planners, who work out the phases of training and modules with due regard for the organisation's training needs and resources; full-time practical trainers who, as has been pointed out, are almost always experts from outside the company (although they may be internal, especially in banking); and part-time trainers, who are usually the company's own employees.

Recent research by the Associazione Italiana Formatori (AIF - Italian trainers' association) may help to give a greater understanding of the trends. Academic qualifications are on the average very high, with over 78% of trainers having a degree. At 36.2, the average age is fairly low. In many cases trainers' previous work experience has been in the field of personnel recruitment or organisation. There are no hard-and-fast channels of access to the profession of trainer. A trainer may or may not

have attended a training course for trainers. Courses of this type are organised by AIF and by other public- and private-sector agencies.

Finally, it should be pointed out that there is no formal recognition of training practitioners. In other words, trainers have no professional register or Order of the kind that exists for other professions. Contracts of employment, with a few exceptions, do not give specific recognition to training professionals.

5. Training provided by employers

Just as it is difficult to assess the scale of training and the labour market for trainers, there are difficulties in evaluating the training work done by employers.

The lack of statistics can be offset by drawing on a survey by ASSCO, a 1,600-member association of firms providing consultancy on company management and organisation. Its survey shows that, of all the services provided to companies by consultancy firms, training comes second in terms of its percentage contribution towards total turnover.

In the past, it was mainly the large companies which called on the consultancy services of ASSCO member firms; today the number and type of those companies are gradually extending. In addition to the large companies, there are now banks, insurance companies, public-sector companies and medium-sized and small companies. All this has had a considerable influence on the number of consultants working in consultancy firms, which has risen from 535 in 1983 to 1,855 in 1989.

6. Case history analyses

The second part of the report takes two Italian corporations that are regarded as leaders in terms of their training provision: Unilever Italia and Pirelli.

In Unilever Italia, training is directed by a Training Board consisting of a number of managers and the directors of personnel of individual Unilever companies. The Board's terms of reference are the analysis of training needs, the formulation of annual plans and supervision. There is also a two-member Training Office, whose tasks include not only organization but also instruction, together with outside consultants.

Unilever is an example of close integration between training and management. The trainers are highly professional and they have very broad, interchangeable responsibilities.

A special feature of Pirelli is that the training process is very extensive, affecting all levels - from management to the shop floor. Management training is organised by a Training Office that comes under the Directorate of Personnel, whereas training on the shop floor is administered by a training school, whose tasks have been broadened in recent years so that it is now a full-blown management consultancy institute.

In both Unilever and Pirelli, managers continue to receive management training throughout most of their careers until they reach a medium-to-high level of responsibility. For higher level management, university courses at leading universities in and outside Italy apply.

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Continuing training in firms and trainer development in Italy

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